Reviews

On Christian Teaching: Practicing Faith in the Classroom. By David I. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7360-6. x + 172pp. £17.99.

This is a book that ought to be read by every Christian who cares about teaching and learning. Smith draws upon reflection on his own years of teaching experience to make a case for distinctively Christian approaches to teaching. It should be pointed out from the start that by 'Christian teaching', Smith does not mean merely sermons or teaching on subjects that are explicitly theological. Rather, he argues for a 'Christian' way of approaching the teaching of any subject. It is, therefore, a book that is profoundly thought provoking and challenging — it has certainly pushed me to think much more carefully and creatively about my own pedagogy.

Smith is careful to reject simplistic views of what it might mean to teach 'Christianly'. He himself teaches German language, but uses examples drawn from different disciplines to make his point. Christian teaching cannot, he argues, mean simply communicating the same information as any non-Christian teacher and then appending a short 'biblical' or 'moral' message to it. Similarly, prayer at the beginning of a class time is not what makes teaching 'Christian'. In fact, he argues that such approaches often feel forced or contrived to students.

Instead, Smith argues for an approach to pedagogy shaped by a biblical/theological vision for flourishing human persons. To take an example from his own field of expertise, Smith points out the tendency for much language teaching to focus on giving a person the tools to get what they need for themselves in a foreign country — to buy food, purchase goods or arrange travel. This is all very well, he argues, but risks communicating an ethos that language acquisition is about enabling me to get what I want for me and misses a more Christian approach that language acquisition should be about learning to love one's neighbour better. If the goal or telos of learning were the latter, then how would teaching be shaped? Smith argues his point persuasively and illustrates it creatively. To reach the end of the book is to want immediately to review every class for which I'm responsible and try to bring it more into line with Smith's vision.

That said, this is ultimately a somewhat tantalising book. He does as good a job as is possible in writing about things that need to be felt and experienced as much as written about — I am convinced by the thrust of Smith's central argument and I am inspired by many of his examples. However, I am left with a lot of work to do — and I suspect that would

be the case for many readers. Perhaps that is inevitable in a book such as this; Smith articulates his principles and gives some illustrations, but many readers could be left wanting more help applying the principles to their own disciplines. For this reason, Smith's book is likely to gain most traction when either individuals (or preferably whole faculties) read and work through the helpful reflection questions and journaling exercises at the end of each chapter and then modify their pedagogy accordingly.

Since this review is, after all, for a theological journal, it is worth closing with some reflections on the challenges Smith's work presents for teaching theology. It would be tempting for many to think that because the subject matter of theological teaching is, well, theological, then it is automatically 'Christian' teaching. This would be a grave mistake and may well contribute to what we might term theological pedagogical complacency. Of all subjects, teaching theology (by Smith's definition of Christian teaching) should not default merely to the delivery of information with perhaps a prayer to preface the class. That would not constitute Christian teaching as far as Smith is concerned. Rather, it would seem that Smith's book would challenge those of us teaching theology to do the harder work of never letting formation be separated from information and consider carefully whether what we do in class is, in fact, helping our students to love God and love their neighbour better — or not.

Mark Stirling, Chalmers Institute, St Andrews

Exodus. By T. Desmond Alexander. (Apollos Old Testamentary Commentary). Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2017. ISBN: 978-08308-2502-8. xx + 764pp. £39.99.

Having preached through Exodus not long ago, and therefore being fairly familiar with what good commentaries are available at all levels, I was curious to see what Alexander's contribution might bring to an already crowded market. With a volume of this size — 764 pages — it has not been possible to read and analyse the whole book, but I have, I believe, a good feel of its contents and approach.

The series claims to be 'accessible to non-experts […] intended primarily to serve the needs of those who preach from the Old Testament […] equally suitable for use by scholars and all serious students of the Bible' (book jacket). I would say that this particular volume achieves those goals, which is commendable, but am not convinced that it adds to what is already available elsewhere.

One of the first things I look for in an OT commentary is the author's stance on the historicity and authorship of the book and I was less than encouraged at Alexander's reasoning about the issue of Mosaic author-

ship. He does not come down firmly on one side or the other but does say that 'Mosaic authorship is not necessarily endorsed by Jesus and his earliest followers' (p. 10). The problem is that he refers to a singular quotation by Jesus in Mark 12:26 where he speaks of the book of Moses and says that this title might simply recognize 'the prominent role played by Moses in the story' (p. 10). However, he ignores the repeated references in which Jesus affirms Mosaic authorship for the Book of the Law (e.g. Matt. 19:7; John 7:19) which encompasses all of the first five OT books. He doesn't interact further than that with what Jesus and the New Testament has to say about the authorship of Exodus and the rest of the Pentateuch.

As he works his way through Exodus, Alexander follows the AOTC series structure. This is a clear and helpful approach, with each section being considered under five headings — Translation, Notes on the Text, Form and Structure, Comment and Explanation.

The Translation is Alexander's own translation of the Hebrew and is followed by some Notes on grammatical issues in the text itself or which are raised by variations in the manuscripts. As a preacher, I thought — and hoped — that I would find the Form and Structure section much more helpful than I did. On occasions, this element of the commentary can take 5 or 6 pages and the result is generally more confusing than clarifying. Personally, I didn't find this aspect contributed to the generally helpful AOTC structure. Additionally, whereas the Comment section is a verse(s) by verse(s) commentary on the passage, it is followed by Explanation which is really further commentary and would have been better included in the Comment section and this would have helped streamline the whole book.

Additionally, there are many references to Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis and other liberal sources, and these got in the way. To be fair, Alexander does note, more than once, that there is 'an increasing unease with this theory' (p. 11), but he doesn't really explain the reason for the unease. I would have expected an evangelical author and publisher to take a stronger stand against these discredited positions which deny elements of inspiration and inerrancy and pay less heed to them.

In an ever increasingly over-populated world of commentaries I ask myself whether this commentary adds anything to what is already available and whether it justifies its production and purchase price. I quickly came to the opinion that this volume adds nothing to what is already out there and, in numerous respects, is not nearly as helpful or profitable. Other works, such as Philip Graham Ryken's 2012 contribution to the Preaching the Word series from Crossway, or John L Mackay's 2001 Mentor Commentary are more robust in their stance on Scripture and clearer in their form and structure. I found Alexander to be too accom-

modating of those with a lower view of Scripture, and that does not inspire confidence in his own treatment of the biblical text.

John Brand, Edinburgh Bible College

Determined to Believe? The Sovereignty of God, Freedom, Faith, & Human Responsibility. By John C. Lennox. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. ISBN: 9780310589808. 368pp. £12.99.

John Lennox was encouraged to write this book at the behest of friends who found his remarks on these topics helpful. The book is, broadly speaking, an attack on the Calvinist theology of salvation—though Lennox prefers to avoid labels, and takes himself to be attacking what he terms theological determinism. He defines this as 'the view that everything is determined by God' (p. 36), including the free actions of human beings. As he points out, theological determinists are therefore compatibilists, holding to a view of free human action as compatible with determinism, while the incompatibilists (or Arminians) hold that free will is incompatible with God determining human choices (p. 25). So far, so good. However, the volume as a whole lacks the rigour necessary for it to have any real value as a contribution to the debate.

The book is divided up, broadly speaking, into six parts of note. The first is a moral argument against theological determinism. Variations of the argument occur throughout the book (see pp. 53, 58, 61, 63, 102, 142, 145, 172, 272) but perhaps the best summary of it is on page 161: 'The deterministic idea [...] that Adam's sin was caused by God's decree, and therefore Adam could not have done otherwise, is grotesque. Morality would thereby be emptied of all coherent meaning.' Quite why this last claim follows is not made clear. Moreover, the argument reveals a profound ignorance of the free-will debate. Some determinists (classical compatibilists) do not grant that God's determination makes one unable to do otherwise. Other determinists, semi-compatibilists, think so-called Frankfurt counterexamples show that being able to do otherwise is not necessary for moral responsibility. Any introductory textbook would have familiarized Lennox with these matters.

The next three noteworthy parts contain Lennox's responses to three different (supposed) arguments for theological determinism. The first argument is that God must determine our salvation otherwise we would be freely contributing to it, and thereby merit it. Lennox responds (p. 132) that having to do something (place one's faith in Christ) in order to be saved is not sufficient to count as meriting it.

The second argument is that human beings are too 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph. 2:1) to be capable of turning to Christ. External determi-

nation from God is therefore required. Lennox responds that, although he believes faith precedes regeneration, there is nevertheless 'much of God's grace to be experienced before someone comes to trust Christ' (p. 142), and it is this that tempers the native depravity of the unbelieving heart, enabling choice.

The third argument for theological determinism is one in name only. It concerns the claim that humanity is guilty in Adam, and deserving of damnation on that account, regardless of whether they have the ability to come to Christ or not. But such a doctrine of original sin doesn't entail theological determinism. Arminians can also grant it. In any case, Lennox's response is that there is no biblical case for original guilt: 'we are all damaged by Adam's sin but we are not all guilty of it' (p. 199).

I accept Lennox's responses to the second and third arguments as defensible, but I don't think his response to the first argument is sufficient. It seems to this reviewer that as long as we are required to do a good thing in order to be saved (and calling on Christ is surely that) then we will have something to boast of concerning our own salvation; but Paul says boasting is excluded (Rom. 3:27). Lennox also wants to claim that salvation is 'all of God' (p. 165), but I can't see how to square this with his view, for he thinks one's free decision to turn to Christ, that event of central importance in salvation, is precisely something that doesn't come from God — you decide; God does not.

The fifth noteworthy section is Lennox's exegesis of Romans 9–11 (chs. 12–16). He rightly notes the importance of this passage when it comes to the Calvinist's appeal to the Scriptures. Lennox takes the well-worn Arminian line that the election discussed in these chapters is an election only to temporal privilege (p. 247). Whether this does justice to Paul's distress in 9:1–3, among other things, I leave the reader to judge.

The last part of note is Lennox's concluding defence of the Perseverance of the Saints (chs. 17–20). He affirms the 'once saved, always saved' doctrine, and is therefore a 4-point Arminian. Although he rejects the T, U, L, and I of TULIP, he accepts the P.

Overall, I cannot recommend this book. The amateurish nature of the work precludes serious scholarly engagement, and it is too muddled in the fundamentals to function as a good introductory text. It is also exceedingly verbose. Far too much of the work is a meandering ramble through tenuously related Scriptures, and it could easily have been shorn of 100+ pages.

Matthew J. Hart, University of Liverpool

Paul: A Biography. By Tom Wright. London: SPCK/San Francisco: HarperOne, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-281-07875-2 (SPCK); 978-0-061-73058-0 (HarperOne). xiii + 464pp. £19.99.[1]

Professor Wright here steps aside from the hand-to-hand scholarly fighting of his more 'academic' writings to lay out the story of Paul's life. He writes as 'Tom' (rather than 'N.T.'), signalling (I assume) that this is a mid-level book, accessible to thoughtful readers who may not have formal theological training. In this he succeeds admirably, for he writes beautifully—on page after page I noted fine turns of phrase, metaphors and analogies.

Wright lays the material out as narrative, with the references almost entirely to primary sources, especially Paul's letters and Acts. Endnotes provide references, and readers are spared the forest of footnotes in contemporary scholarly books on Paul (including Wright's own).

The book falls into three parts, with the second the longest. A helpful scene-setting introduction includes a semi-autobiographical section on why Paul is important, important historical and cultural issues in studying the first century, and a discussion of the overall story of (Old Testament) Scripture as Saul of Tarsus saw it before the Damascus Road.

Part I 'Beginnings' outlines Saul's upbringing, and key Jewish traditions which shaped him. He notes (ch. 1) in particular Phinehas (Num 25) as someone who showed 'zeal' which was 'reckoned to him as righteousness' (Ps 106:30–31). Wright connects this with Abraham's faith-reckoned-as-righteousness (Gen 15:6), and argues that Saul was part of the violent ('zealous') tendency within Judaism, by contrast with the 'live and let live' approach of his teacher, Gamaliel.

The Damascus Road experience is critical (ch. 2). Wright suggests (following John Bowker, whom he does not name here) that Saul was meditating on the chariot/throne vision of Ezekiel 1 as he travelled, and that his shock was to find that the figure in the chariot was Jesus. This was the driver (pun intended) of the 'messianic eschatology' which was the centre of Paul's faith and practice over the following decades.

Wright paints Paul's movements following that experience (ch. 3), drawing together information from Galatians 1 and Acts (the maps at the beginning of each chapter are very helpful for visualising distances and journeys). Necessarily, here and elsewhere, Wright has to 'gap fill,' not least for the silent ten years of AD 36–46, and his suggestions are generally plausible and always clearly explained. I particularly like the clos-

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ing section chapter 3, considering Paul as a man of prayer, where Wright suggests how Paul's praying of Scripture changed in the light of his new recognition of Jesus as the exalted Lord.

Paul's time in Antioch (ch. 4) follows. Wright portrays the multi-cultural nature of the city, and shows what it would look like for Barnabas and Paul's messianic group to gain purchase in that city. He highlights that this group, crossing boundaries of 'culture, gender, and ethnic and social groupings' (p. 91), sets the agenda for Paul's church-planting and pastoring ministries—through Jesus, God is bringing humanity together as one.

Part II, 'Herald of the King,' tells the missionary life of Paul, using Acts in interaction with the letters. Here, I can only identify highlights. Wright sees Galatians as the earliest Pauline letter (a significant, but minority, view, with which I agree), and identifies the crisis in Galatia with the issues leading up to the Jerusalem meeting (Acts 15).

Wright stresses in a number of places (e.g. pp. 110–12) that we must eschew our modern division of 'religion' and 'politics', which is anachronistic in the first century—to follow Jesus as Lord was necessarily to make a social and political statement (readers of Wright will recognize his claim that Jesus-followers were necessarily downgrading Caesar's claims to universal rule). Thus he sees Paul's choice of cities for church-planting as deliberate, focusing on centres of the imperial cult.

Wright outlines a plausible scenario for writing 2 Corinthians (ch. 12), proposing that Paul writes in fits and starts over a journey from Ephesus to Corinth taking some months. For the longest time, Paul does not know whether his (now lost) previous letter and Titus's visit have produced a change in the Corinthians' negative attitudes, and this explains the defensive nature of much of the letter. When Titus arrives (2 Cor 7:6–7), the tone of the letter changes, and Paul then asks for the Corinthians' participation in the collection (2 Cor 8–9) and is much more upbeat (2 Cor 10–13).

A particular feature is the mini-expositions of the Pauline letters, and these are always fresh, readable and stimulating, inviting readers to read and reflect on the letters themselves (Wright's intention, I'm sure). The reading of Romans is masterful and characteristically Wrightian (pp. 321–37) — his long engagement with Romans, dating back to his Oxford DPhil, shines through.

Wright believes Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus for a period, concerning which neither Acts nor letters are explicit. Wright shows the explanatory power of this hypothesis (ch. 10), and locates the four 'prison letters' (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon) in this period

— 'Ephesians' (which Wright, with many, thinks is a circular for several churches) is written from Ephesus.

The book closes with a chapter on Paul's journey to Rome (ch. 14) and a reflection on Paul's contribution and achievements (ch. 15). The latter is a brilliant summary and hints at how Christians today might be freshly stimulated by a deep engagement with Paul.

Throughout, Wright takes seriously the whole range of evidence, rejecting writing sources off because they are considered historically unreliable (as some regard Acts) or 'deutero-Pauline' (i.e. not written by Paul—notably the Pastoral Letters, Ephesians, Colossians, and 2 Thessalonians). Wright robustly uses most of these as sources of evidence, although he hesitates considerably about 1 Timothy and Titus (pp. 396–97).

Who should read this book? It is accessible enough for a thoughtful church member without theological training to read (it would be great for an adult Sunday school course), although they'd need to be ready for 400+ pages. It would be helpful for a theological student looking for a 'bird's eye view' of Paul with lots of helpful insights and details along the way. It would make a great book to use for a Paul class alongside something more traditionally 'scholarly' (such as David Horrell's *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*. 3rd ed. London/New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015).

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The Christ of Wisdom: A Redemptive Historical Exploration of the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament. By O. Palmer Robertson. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-62995-291-8. xxi + 407pp. £15.26.

This book is conceived as the next part of Robertson's larger project to find 'Christ in all the Scriptures' (p. xv), following volumes dedicated to the covenants, prophets, and psalms. Here, he considers the 'Wisdom' books: Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, and Song of Songs. Though these last two are not always considered 'wisdom', Robertson binds them all together as being the 'how-to' books of the Bible, dealing with practical areas of life (p. xvii). The volume will be of particular interest to teachers and pastors of a more conservative Christian tradition.

The Wisdom literature has often been neglected in Old Testament theology, for it is considered to be outside the redemptive-historical framework delineated elsewhere. Robertson reconceives this. Instead of seeing redemption history as a straight line, marching forwards, he imagines a 'spiral of redemption' (p. 25), allowing for the more universal, and ever-repeated features of wisdom to be included, and thus reintegrated into biblical theology.

The book's focus is mainly on the Old Testament texts themselves, but there are frequent reflections on the relevance for the New Testament and Christian theology, and Robertson's tone is sometimes hortatory. Occasionally, poems or hymns are quoted (pp. 132, 272, 315). Robertson's own standpoint is conservative, and some less conservative readers may find some of his comments and language unnecessary or provocative (e.g. references to evolution, p. 110, and gender/sexuality, p. 112; use of gendered terminology 'man', 'he' etc.).

While most of the book is devoted to interpretation of the text, due consideration is given to historical- and composition-critical matters. To benefit readers not wanting to delve into the minutiae, individual scholars' views and detailed technical discussions are kept to footnotes. Robertson's historical-critical conclusions are conservative, and usually marginal to mainstream scholarship. He supports the traditional ascription of Solomonic authorship for much of Proverbs (pp. 34–36), Ecclesiastes (pp. 205–217) and Song of Solomon (pp. 324–238), as well as positing the Solomonic period for the composition of Job (p. 123), and suggesting Jeremiah as the author of Lamentations (p. 280). Though he does discuss both sides of the argument, sometimes I feel he does not fairly represent his opponents' views (e.g. the binary oppositions of monarchic vs. 3rd century BCE for the date of Proverbs ignores possible exilic and Persian datings, p. 35).

Each chapter of Robertson's volume considers a different biblical book, beginning with a contents page for the chapter and ending with a bibliography — helpful for readers wishing to examine one book alone. His consideration of Proverbs is entitled 'How to walk in wisdom's way'. He explores each section of Proverbs individually, drawing out key themes, and highlighting poetic features. He ends by discussing secular versus covenantal perspectives on Proverbs, preferring the latter (which is striking for a book often considered devoid of covenantal themes). He highlights the importance of fear of, trust in, and instruction from the covenant Lord, and focusses on creation, family, and work.

Job concerns 'How to puzzle'. Robertson works through this challenging book section by section, giving explanations and analysis, and showing sensitivity to figures of speech (see his impressive lists on pp. 155–156, 168–169, 183–184). In the comparatively short final section on 'the ultimate message' (pp. 189–194), Robertson argues that Job affirms the doctrine of retribution; can be taken as a figure of speech for the restoration of all believers; and offers guidance on how to puzzle.

Robertson reads Ecclesiastes as a guide to 'How to cope with life's frustrations'. He sees the book as a single, united work (against those who think the epilogue has a different theology). Considering it to be 'a realis-

tic picture of life' (pp. 245–246), he offers a theological interpretation of its 'Gospel' (pp. 255–268) — provocative for those who think that the book contains anything but 'good news'!

Lamentations gives advice on 'How to weep'. Robertson understands the logic of Lamentations as being: calamity has come; sin has caused it; God has ordered it; hope nonetheless. His ultimate interpretation seems more hope-filled than the book itself, and may be heavily influenced by his overall framework, for which redemption is central.

Finally, the Song of Songs is about 'How to love'. Breaking with the tradition of many Christian interpreters, Robertson rejects allegorical and typological interpretations, preferring a straightforward reading which finds a celebration of human love (though this must be situated, Robertson urges, in a monogamous marriage relationship, and a redemptive-historical framework). Rather than the usual interpretive section, Robertson finishes the book by offering his own translation of the Song, supplemented by short commentaries, designed for 'dramatic reading' (pp. 351–379). Some readers may wish to try this interesting and creative suggestion in their own communities.

Overall, this is a helpful volume for those wishing to integrate the wisdom books into conservative Christian theology, and to find within them insights for the how-tos of life.

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Reading Genesis Well: Navigating History, Poetry, Science, and Truth in Genesis 1–11. By C. John Collins. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-310-59857-2. 336pp. £25.

Jack Collins' book addresses what is often a contentious topic within evangelical circles: how do we read the early chapters of Genesis? He approaches this from a linguistic perspective, but without losing sight of the theological aspects. His overall method is built on the ideas of C. S. Lewis and the concept of 'good-faith communication'. He suggests a 'linguistic-rhetorical-literary' interpretive approach that can be appropriated for the whole of Scripture. Although Collins is technical in his approach and his work is 'academic' in style, it is well explained and should be digestible to a wider audience. This work may be profitably read and applied by most people willing to put in the effort.

The influence of C. S. Lewis in this work cannot be understated, and this review of Collins' book would be incomplete without Collins' reference to a quote from *A Preface to Paradise Lost*: 'The first qualification for judging any piece of workmanship from a corkscrew to a cathedral is to know what it is—what it was intended to do and how it is meant to be

used' (C. S. Lewis quoted in Collins, p. 34). This is the guiding principle of Collins' book: to understand what the text is, what it was intended to do, and how it is meant to be used.

Collins begins his work with some historical background of biblical interpretation from the 19th century to today. He demonstrates how pursuit of the 'simple' or 'literal' sense of the words has led to an unnatural procedure for interpreting language. The simple sense has come to refer to an artificial 'simple' sense imposed on the text by the reader.

In his second chapter, Collins addresses the deceptively simple question of what happens in literary communication. He covers first how literary communications should be approached and then moves on to discuss subtopics of linguistics, rhetoric, literary criticism, and genre. Collins' attention to the underlying theories is continually apparent. In the area of genre, for example, he helpfully distinguishes different facets of language (e.g. register and style) which, in Biblical Studies, are often conflated with genre in a confusing and unhelpful manner.

In chapter three, Collins draws in Speech Act Theory. He uses it as a tool for helping explain the different functions of biblical language. One important conclusion of the chapter is that the function of the biblical text goes beyond conveying information. It importantly aims to shape 'a view of God and the world, his people's place in the world, and their role in the unfolding story of God's work in the world' (p. 86).

Chapter four is titled 'Good-Faith Communication: What does it mean to speak truly?' In this chapter Collins examines how communication works and relates to truth. One important facet of what Collins calls 'good-faith communication' is that 'Not every good-faith act of communication requires that the speaker endorse what he alludes to' (p. 93). He gives the example of referring to the actions of Sam and Frodo (p. 93); this can be done in good-faith without explicitly stating the characters are fictional. An implication for biblical interpretation is seen on his next page 'I suspect that this explains why Jude 14 does not need to explicate its stance toward whether the traditions that we know as the book of Enoch are canonical—he shares a stance with his audience and leaves them to see that' (p. 94).

This leads to a small but integral comment concerning *world picture* and *worldview*. Collins defines these two carefully with the world picture being 'what one imagines to be the shape of the world and the things in it' and the worldview being 'one's basic dispositional stance toward the world' (p. 94). The worldview is something that 'is intended to be normative and to transcend culture and time period' (p. 94). Collins argues that good-faith communication sometimes does and sometimes does

not require endorsement of the *world picture* in order for it to be true (or truthful).

In the remaining chapters (more than two-thirds of the book) Collins applies his work on how communication works to interpreting Genesis 1–11. It is my view that in these chapters he well demonstrates the value of reading Scripture in the manner described. However, I leave it with the reader to read and evaluate these chapters themselves. I have focused on the early chapters here because it is Collins' hope that his method be appropriated for biblical interpretation more generally.

Collins' book is an excellent contribution to scholarship on biblical interpretation. He approaches the material in an exemplary manner, treating language as language and carefully examining what that means for biblical communication. This is well worth including on one's reading list!

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Torah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality and Hermeneutics. By Ben Witherington III. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2018. ISBN: 9781506433516. xxviii + 414pp. £28.99.

Along with his previous volumes, *Psalms Old and New* and *Isaiah Old and New* (both 2017), this new volume *Torah Old and New* completes Ben Witherington III's trilogy addressing the use of the OT in the NT. The binding and design are the same, forming an attractive set, and the format of the book mirrors the approach already established in the previous volumes. Many of the themes in this volume on *Torah* pick up again on themes introduced in the previous volumes: for example, the importance of reading both 'backward' and 'forward'. Throughout, Witherington writes in his usual easy and accessible style, and with wit and creativity. The book is not particularly technical, and would be well-suited to college students and ministers wishing to benefit from some reading in the area of OT intertextualities in the NT.

An introductory chapter sets out the overall landscape of the use of the Pentateuch in the NT. Witherington relies in these volumes on citations, allusions and echoes as noted by Nestle-Aland (NA28), and his statistics are taken from a complied list of all of these. This opening chapter also begins to address reflection on the Pentateuch in early Judaism — this is a welcome feature of all of the volumes — and an assessment of Jesus' teaching against that backdrop. Four main chapters then address in turn the use of the books of the Pentateuch in the NT: Genesis; Exodus; Leviticus and Numbers; and Deuteronomy. In each of these chapters, important sections of text are discussed, first by addressing the meaning

in their 'original' context, and then the use of the particular section in the NT. Sections in each chapter titled 'The Lexicon of Faith' deal with more minor uses of the particular book in the NT. In a final chapter, Witherington reflects upon the whole.

The task that Ben Witherington has set himself is massive, and therefore his approach is necessarily selective. Some passages are not addressed which one might have expected to be. The selection of material often reflects Witherington's own (perhaps sometimes idiosyncratic) concerns, and draws heavily at points on his previous NT work. So, within the Genesis chapter, the influence of the Noah Account is seen in Matthew 24 (less than 3 pages), but 2 Peter is not discussed at all. Similarly, although Witherington notes the connection, there is no discussion of the use of Genesis in Revelation 21 and 22. The use of Genesis 6 in the NT, on the other hand, is given almost 15 pages plus an appendix (although this is a very useful section). It will perhaps be a relief to some readers that the issue of Paul and the Law is kept in check by Witherington through a focused, concise and helpful discussion of the various texts.

It is clear that Ben Witherington's aim here is to illustrate the variety of ways in which Pentateuchal texts are used within the NT. He addresses the genre of narrative for the first time (the previous volumes dealing with poetic and prophetic texts), pointing out that around half of the material in the Torah is in fact narrative. He emphasizes the importance of narrative in providing a much broader framework to the thought of the NT than can be detected by picking up on quotations and echoes alone. Witherington is critical of such approaches as being too narrow (e.g. *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*, eds Beale and Carson, Baker, 2007). Witherington's own appeal for an awareness of this wider function of the fundamental narrative of Israel resonates with the work of Hays, and also Wright's emphasis on worldview.

This volume does not address intertextual theory specifically (again, some readers may be relieved). For example, the distinctions between quotation, allusion and echo are not discussed, but rather Witherington gets down to business grappling with the texts. However, at points, there are very helpful reflections on the broader nature of intertextuality. Witherington compares the NT authors' uses of Pentateuchal texts as sometimes akin to a jazz musician improvising around a well-known tune. This improvisation can only occur because the base tune is so well-known and accepted. This, in fact, provides the necessary freedom for improvisation — the base tune is always in view. This notion of an intertext functioning as a solid and stable anchor, despite new uses of it in a later text, resonates with Michael Riffaterre's theory of textual stability.

There are three appendices to the book. The first is a complete list of the intertextualities noted by Nestle-Aland; the second, a review of a book that has clearly been influential in Witherington's own reflections on Genesis 1 and 2 — Venema and McKnight's *Adam and the Genome* (Brazos, 2017); and the third, a short excursus (as mentioned above) on the connections between Genesis 6, *1 Enoch* and 1 Peter 3.

With this final volume of his trilogy, the prolific Witherington has delivered a valuable and stimulating set of works exploring the use of the Old Testament in the New.

David R. Kirk, Highland Theological College

Grounded in Heaven: Recentering Christian Hope and Life on God. By Michael Allen. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7453-5. 186pp. £13.77.

Michael Allen's Grounded in Heaven seeks to reform current thinking on Christian hope, that is the promise of the future resurrected state of all believers. He does this by retrieving Classical Christian thinking on the beatific vision (i.e. seeing God in heaven and the New Creation). Allen effectively demonstrates the value of interacting with voices from the past to shape Christian life today. At 160 pages and only four chapters, this book is an example of brevity and depth. It is a concise and multifaceted resource and should be accessible to both ministers and laypeople of any denomination.

In the first chapter, drawing explicitly on John Calvin, Thomas Aquinas, and various contemporary authors, he retrieves a 'substantively theological' eschatology (p. 23), by which he means an eschatology which has God as the centre of Christian hope. This contrasts with an eschatology in which God is an instrument to some greater end. In the second chapter, he reforms this Classical Christian belief in the beatific vision by arguing that while the Bible teaches that God is invisible, the Bible promises that one day Christians will see God. However, Allen takes this to be the Son. Therefore, the Christian hope of the beatific vision is more properly a vision of the Son.

In chapter three, drawing on John Owen, Irenaeus of Lyons, Herman Witsius, Jeremiah Burroughs, Augustine, Calvin, and various contemporary authors, he retrieves the idea that Christians must cultivate a 'heavenly mindedness'. By this Allen means a conscious meditation on God and on all things having their being in Him so that believers may be of some benefit to other Christians, nonbelievers, and society in general in their current life.

In the fourth chapter, Allen reforms 'heavenly mindedness' by following John Calvin's lead in locating 'heavenly mindedness' in connection to the believer's union with Christ. Because of this union with Christ, Christians deny themselves and live to Christ (i.e. 'heavenly mindedness') thereby properly reorienting every earthly good this side of glory. Allen's reform of 'heavenly mindedness', in its essence, transforms self-denial from contempt of one's self or earthly goods into following the principles of scripture which is first and foremost delight in God and all things in as much as they participate in God.

The contribution of *Grounded in Heaven* can be considered in three ways. First, the book offers some critique of the emphasis of Kuyperian tradition, which reacts against an overly spiritual perspective by fixating on the physicality of heaven. In contrast, Allen steps outside this material-spiritual frame of thinking to show how God is the substance of the Christian hope; we will be so transfixed by seeing God that everything else will pale in significance. Second, the book exposes its readers to a broad range of traditions from Catholic, the Reformation, the Puritans, to the early Church, thereby demonstrating intellectual humility in an age of outrage and cultural tribes. Thus, Allen demonstrates how a Christian should engage with other intellectual tribes and their traditions. Lastly, the book retrieves a largely unknown hope: namely, the beatific vision, the sight of, and so intimacy with, God. Scripture makes the promise that one day Christians will not rely on the faith of hearing, but the assuredness of sight. While faith and hope may fade away, love will be for an eternity because we will behold God (1 Cor. 13:12–13).

The reform of 'heavenly mindedness' should be useful to the pastor who is attempting to grow in their Christian life, and also seeking to help different members of his Church grow. The reform of the beatific vision may also help many Christians understand Scripture better, and the promise contained therein. The chapters on retrieval are valuable because they will help expose one to the broader traditions of the church. Even though the reader may disagree with one tradition or another, they will at least be more educated about the different focuses and will hopefully grow in appreciation.

Jake Michel, Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Justification: Volume 1. By Michael Horton. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0310491606. 399pp. £18.99.

Justification: Volume 2. By Michael Horton. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0310578383. 527pp. £18.99.

The New Studies in Dogmatics series is quickly, in the view of this reader, becoming essential reading for academic theologians as well as pastors who want to teach biblical doctrines to their congregations with depth and precision. The series overall aims to engage with the best of traditional Christian sources from all periods of church history and provide fresh theological construction of crucial doctrines. Michael Horton's contribution to this series addresses the doctrine of justification, that issue of how sinners can be right with God, and it represents a remarkable achievement in theological thinking. Horton takes on this topic both with a rigorous academic intellect and an obviously pastoral heart, and both are clear on every page as he labours to read all the sources fairly with a deep concern for the truth and awareness for what is good for the people of God.

The first volume is a work on historical theology, tracing the development of the doctrine of justification from the patristic period into the Reformation and early post-Reformation period. This is a masterful treatment of intellectual history that alternates engagement with primary and secondary sources with remarkable skill. Horton clearly immersed himself in the actual primary literature for important patristic and medieval theologians, as well as the expected assessment of Reformation period primary sources by Martin Luther, John Calvin, and their fellow reformers. It is a rare but pleasing thing to see someone cite actual works by William of Ockham when assessing his views. Perhaps the only improvement on this front could have been more engagement with primary works by John Duns Scotus, for whom Horton relied mostly on secondary literature and its citations of Scotus. There was only one historical mistake in this volume wherein Horton confused a piece of secondary literature about Roman Catholic theologian Ambrogio Catarino to be about Cardinal Gasparo Contarini, who played a major role at the Council of Trent (p. 336, n. 101).

The analysis in this volume seems comprehensive, although narrowly focused on topics relevant to justification. The opening chapter sets the stage by describing the various academic conversations currently taking place that form the background for this work. The primary targets Horton had in view are the New Perspective on Paul and Radical Orthodoxy, both of which have challenged the traditional Protestant understanding

of justification. This overt aim to use historical theology towards dogmatic ends of course makes this a fascinating work because most works on historical theology hide their theological goals under the auspices of dispassionate historiography. This could be a disaster in some cases, but Horton's nuanced and balanced reading of the changes in doctrine across the Christian tradition reveals that he never defaults to proof texting, but always takes account of doctrines within their changing intellectual apparatuses and provides a clear analysis of the ideas.

The chapters in this volume begin moving in roughly chronological order from the patristic period through the Reformation, but shift towards the end to consider more topical or categorical issues. These last chapters provide penetrating summary evidence to support the thesis of Horton's work that the biggest variance within the broader Christian tradition happened in the medieval period within the nominalist schools, and that line of thought triumphed in the Council of Trent. He maps out how the premiere patristic and medieval thinkers, even though few had a thoroughly forensic understanding of justification due to their dependence on Latin translations of the Bible rather than the Greek New Testament, still deeply opposed Pelagian and semi-Pelagian views of salvation. Even doctrines that Protestants find problematic no matter how they are expressed, like the Roman view of the supperadded gift, are articulated in ways that are closer to later Protestant views by Thomas Aquinas than the way nominalists like Scotus, Ockham, and Gabriel Biel articulated them. Further, Horton also does a wonderful job of demonstrating the differences between the actual views of Aquinas and 20th century neo-Thomism, which is important because the neo-Thomist movement did significantly reinterpret Aquinas in light of modernity. Some within conservative Protestantism will not like that Horton took a largely positive, although certainly critical stance towards Aquinas, but their objections have likely not considered that within the spectrum of medieval theology, Aquinas was far more adaptable to Protestant goals than the Pelagian leaning nominalist theologians, who also argued for ontological univocity. In the end, it was the less orthodox strains of nominalist soteriology that were adopted by the Council of Trent and remain the views of the Roman communion today.

Whereas volume one dealt with historical issues, but in fact made its own pointed argument, volume two addressed exegetical issues and dogmatic construction. This book is a tour de force response to recent attempts to revise the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone from within Protestant circles. The main targets here are the New Perspective on Paul, Radical Orthodoxy, and Federal Vision writer, Peter Leithart. Horton has a remarkable breadth of reading, and engaged fairly

with authors of multiple disciplines. Many theologians are not well versed in biblical studies, but Horton has mounted stacks of exegetical and linguistic evidence against modern challenges to justification by faith alone. His main argument is that modern revisions of this doctrine almost all make some kind of false dichotomy. They tend to set covenant against relationship, forensic categories against transformative ones, and the history of salvation against the order of salvation, but properly understood these *distinctions* are not dualisms opposed to each other absolutely. Many have thought that the way to uphold the need for personal transformation is to collapse that requirement into justification. But Horton shows that is not the case. Justification is not the whole of salvation even if it is a foundational element of it that secures subsequent aspects of the order of salvation.

The first section of this volume outlined the covenantal framework for a properly Reformed, even just biblical, understanding of what justification is. Horton showed that the covenants are the context in which God renders a verdict of justified or condemned. Yet we see in Scripture the distinction between law and promise covenants. This section alone may be worth the price of the book as it is a thorough and robust explanation and defence of Reformed covenant theology oriented towards its explanatory power for soteriology.

The second section described the achievement of justification, looking at the historical work of Christ. The primary takeaway here is the importance of the active and passive obedience of Christ. The point perhaps most polemical here is the refutation of a new insistence on the Christus Victor motif over against penal substitutionary atonement. Again, Horton showed this a false dichotomy, arguing that Christus Victor is a biblical theme, but it is not only compatible with, but best understood in light of penal substitution.

The third section explores the mechanics of justification. He addressed new attempts to redefine justification, showing justification is in fact a term linked with salvation not just ecclesiology, and also defended the basis of justification as the imputation of Christ's righteousness. It is not a transformative category but rests on a legal declaration. The last section talked about the reception of justification, defending the traditional Protestant view that justification is received by faith alone within the context of union with Christ. The culmination of these sections is perhaps the most thorough theological and exegetical response to the New Perspective and Federal Vision to date. Horton's arguments are devastatingly convincing, as he draws on a vast knowledge of historical, exegetical, and theological studies, and proved that these attempted revisions have not even understood the Protestantism they supposedly critique. In fact, they

have responded to pietism more than confessional Protestantism. There are a few editorial slips in this volume where footnotes refer to a different work than indicated in the body of the text, but that does not detract from the immense value of this book and its argumentative force.

Many readers will be familiar with Horton's work, as he has produced a massive stack of books that handle academic theology and pastoral issues. It can hardly be doubted that Michael Horton has been a gift to Christ's church, and the present work proves that yet again. This is a tremendously useful set of books on one of the capstone doctrines of the Christian faith. Horton has managed to create a remarkably traditional understanding of the doctrine of justification, that aligns with trajectories from all eras of church history, that is also vigorously Protestant, and should obviously stand as a premiere work for many years to come. If you are an academic, you will have to engage this work if you want to discuss justification. If you are a pastor, get this work now and read it with enthusiasm. Reading it will be a blessing to you and become one to your congregation as you teach them in light of it.

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Christianity in North Africa and West Asia. Edited by Kenneth R. Ross, Mariz Tadros and Todd M. Johnson. (Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity Vol. 2). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018. ISBN: 9781474428057. 499pp. £150.

The *Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity*, of which this is the second volume in the series, follow on from the *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010*. The series combines reliable demographic information with a wide range of essays written by specialists in this field. This second volume focuses on a part of the world where the Christian Church has faced extremely difficult conditions for its witness and serious questions have been raised as to whether it can even survive in some of these countries as a result of the impact of religious persecution. It is a sobering but invaluable analysis of Christian witness in these social contexts.

The first two chapters cover a demographic profile of Christianity in these twenty-five locations together with an overview of the complexity of the confusing array of different Orthodox and Catholic Churches present, together with more recent Protestant bodies, in mainly Islamic-majority countries. Not only have these Christians suffered from the limitations brought about by their minority religion status, but Western political actions in many of these countries, especially in more recent years, have had a devastating impact on the viability of the remaining Christian communities. The next sixteen chapters cover mainly specific countries

though one chapter covers the Gulf States and three cover two locations such as Armenia and Karabakh or Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The next eight chapters focus on 'Major Christian Traditions'. These are Anglicans, Independents, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Protestants, Catholics, Evangelicals and Pentecostals / Charismatics. It will be clear to readers that there are obvious overlaps in the boundaries of some of these particular titles, however, the editors and authors in this book have endeavoured to cover as fairly as possible the range of Christian traditions present in these countries. Space restrictions have undoubtedly led to the omission of references to Protestant Christian Churches with a very limited representation, but it is an invaluable account of the presence and witness of the relatively larger historic churches in these countries.

The third main section of chapters on key themes for Christianity in the region covers faith and culture, worship and spirituality, theology, the social and political context, mission and evangelism, gender, religious freedom, inter-religious relations, monastic movements and spirituality, ecclesiology, Christian media and displaced populations, prior to a concluding chapter on the future of Christianity in North Africa and West Asia.

In summary, this is an invaluable guide to the heritage of the Christian communities in two regions of the world largely dominated by Islam. It will be a standard reference work for years to come. A couple of very minor criticisms would include questioning the claim that Evangelicals only became a distinctive group of Christians in the mid-nineteenth century (p.285). This does seem rather late. Secondly, in the references to Roman Catholic documents on ecumenical relations in the later twentieth century (p.358) the broad point being made is correct, but it cannot be denied that *Dominus Jesus* (2000) was a backward step in its comments on the status of non-episcopal churches.

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Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation. By Richard Bauckham. London: DLT, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-232-52791-9. 226pp. £14.95.

As the population of the planet continues to increase and ecological disasters touch an increasing number of communities across the world there are some serious questions which need to be addressed by the people of God. In his book *Bible and Ecology*, Richard Bauckham seeks to establish a new paradigm for meaningful discussion about living as creatures in a fallen creation.

The book has its origin as a series of lectures which survey the relationship between humanity and the community of creation. It is a straight forward layout with each chapter exploring a different dimension of this topic. One thing to note and be commended from the beginning is the exegetical work which is displayed throughout. Although readers will not always agree with every observation and application, Bauckham's commitment to thoughtfully walking through various texts is to be commended.

He begins by tackling the area of stewardship terminology in chapter 1. Bauckham argues that this vocabulary is misunderstood and has not given the people of God 'a framework within which to approach ecological issues with concern and responsibility' (p. 2). It is a helpful discussion which points out wrongly assumed power relations and leads the reader to re-evaluate humanity's role within the wider creation as revealed in the narrative of Genesis 1-2. Chapter 2 sees a consideration of Job 38-40 inviting further opportunity to reassess our position in creation as creatures. Bauckham rightly argues that, as the largest section in the Bible to deal with the non-human creation, it should feature far more prominently in discussion about the church's interaction with ecological issues than it has done.

Bauckham then presents his new paradigm of humanity as fellow members of the created order in chapter 3. He does this by taking the reader through various texts, particularly Ps 104, Matt 6:25-33 and Ps 148. Although humans are not divine they do have a special role. Creation should never be elevated to the position of divinity nor lowered to a commodity for human exploitation and consumption. Rather, creation should be viewed as sacred. In chapter 4 Bauckham handles the effects of the fall on creation and human culture. He argues that images of redemption in the Bible are not to be seen as utopian but ecotopian; all of creation restored becoming everything that it should be.

The final chapter surveys various passages from the New Testament, suggesting that we must view the whole of history as 'a Christological eco-narrative' (p. 151). Rightly Bauckham affirms that the centre of everything in the universe is the cross of Christ. Only the crucified and risen Jesus can bring the chaos of a fallen world back into alignment. It should be noted that this section contains good observations concerning Christian interaction with technology. Bauckham urges the reader to consider the inherent challenges presented in a physical and intellectual dualism which can be created when trying to replace the natural world with bio-engineering and artificial intelligence.

This book is a great resource for Christians who seek to live life under the Lordship of Christ in every aspect. Bauckham brings wisdom, sim-

plicity and a much needed corrective for the church to consider this important issue as we face increasing globalisation and the ecological challenges which will come as a result. It is easy to access and because of the books origin as a series of lectures it is possible to pick up each section as a stand-alone.

Unlike many other engagements with this topic or humanities role in creation, Bauckham manages to hold together biblical truth, theological reflection and practical application. It is a timely contribution in many areas, particularly for those researching and advocating creation care in the world of global mission and pastors seeking to prepare churches to engage biblically and theologically with these realties in the 21st century.

Martin Paterson, OMF